**Lesson Title:** History of Our Place

**Name of Corresponding Unit:** Our Unique Place

**Creator:** Rachael Gustaveson and Anne Lessard

**Grade level(s):** 7

**Recommended Duration:** 80 minutes

**Essential Question:** What can learning about our own place tell us about other places?

**Specific Learning Goals for this lesson:**

* Students will know:
* Woodstock, Vermont's characteristics in terms of the themes of geography
* Students will understand:
* Every place has certain characteristics.
* Learning about our own place (Woodstock or VT) informs us how our place is unique.
* Students will be able to:
* Apply the five themes of geography to the state of Vermont

**Lesson Overview:**

Students will read an article on Vermont’s history (“The Selling of Vermont”) and take notes using the dialectic notebook format. Using the information from the article, paired students will then animate a video using Xtranormal.com to apply the five themes of geography to the state of Vermont.

**Description & Sequence:**

1. Warm up: Brainstorm nouns. Make a list on the board. Have students complete this sentence:

Vermont is like a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because. . . . .

Share ideas with class.

1. Introduce the Dialectic Notebook – can be done on paper or on computer.
   1. Pass out a copy of the article, “Vermont’s Forested Past”
   2. Read the first paragraph together and show an example of how to summarize it and answer the questions for the dialectic notebook.
2. Allow students time to finish reading and taking notes individually.
3. Let students choose their partners. Students will use their notes to create an Xtranormal video using information from the article to show the themes of geography in Vermont.
   1. Video should be no longer than 2 minutes long.
   2. Video must include two questions that each pair would like to ask the author.
4. Consolidation: Discussion – What does learning about our place tell us about other places?
   1. Allow think time before students answer. May be done in a Ticket to Leave format.

**Pre-Assessment:**

The pre-assessment is the warm up activity. Students comparing Vermont to an unlike object demonstrates students knowledge, understanding, and opinion on their home state.

**Formative Assessment(s):**

Students will create an Xtranormal video explaining Vermont with the five themes of geography that are exemplified in the article.

How will you **Differentiate Instruction** for various learners? (Consider content, process, and product)

Students who need extra help reading will receive the article with important points already highlighted or underlined. These students may also focus on summarizing the article in the dialectic notebook and will have questions ready to be answered on the right side of the notebook. For example, the right side of the notebook would have the answer already started: “One example of human environment interaction in the state of Vermont is . . .”

Students who are at a high level of reading and need to be challenged a bit more could receive questions on the right hand side of the notebook that are a little more challenging and abstract. For example: “The article shows many examples of human environment interaction in the past. What could it be like in Vermont 50 years from now?”

Other articles, or supplemental articles, could also be given to a student who is ready for a harder challenge.

Students may submit their dialectic notebooks online (Email or GoogleDocs) or on paper.

**Student-centered learning:**

*Collaboration/Student Choice* -Students choose their own partners and will be actively creating a video to explain their knowledge.

*Experiential Learning* – Using Xtranormal to create their video.

*Challenge/Rigor* – There are varying levels of questions in the dialectic notebook. Students will answer them according to their level of understanding.

**Inquiry-based learning:**

Students participate in structured inquiry posed by questions in the dialectic notebook.

**Materials:**

Net books  
Dialectic Notebook instructions and questions

"The Selling of Vermont: From Agriculture to Tourism, 1860-1910" by Andrea Rebek – from *In a State of Nature: Readings in Vermont History* by H. Nicholas Muller, III and Samuel B. Hand, 1982, Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier, VT

**Resources:**

Xtranormal.com

Vermont Standards & Grade Expectations Addressed:

**H&SS7-8:8** Students connect the past with the present by  
-Describing ways that life in the U.S and/or the world has both changed and stayed the same over time, and explaining why these changes have occurred.

**R7: 16 Analyze and interpret informational text, citing evidence as appropriate by…**-Explaining connections about information within a text, across texts, or to related ideas  
-Synthesizing and evaluating information within or across text(s) (e.g., constructing appropriate titles; or formulating assertions or controlling ideas)  
-Making inferences about causes or effects

21st Century Skills including Technology:

Xtranormal video animation  
Critical reading and questioning

File Attachments:

Dialectic Notebook – Instructions and Example

“The Selling of Vermont” Article